

Harper Center Bulletin

HARPER CENTER
BULLETIN #243

FEBRUARY 1ST, 2015

February 2015 Newsletter

Well folks, the snow has actually arrived! I didn't really think that it would ever get here but tah-dah! It's actually kind of interesting when you have a snow day in the middle of the work week and everything comes to a halt. I walked into work during that so-called super storm last week and fortunately there was nobody around. So I worked on this newsletter and my annual town report. Then the phone rang. I thought it would be someone asking me if we were open-it usually happens in the worst of weather but it wasn't. Instead it was a telephone call from a town elders child indicating that a parent had fallen during the night and needed assistance. A little questioning revealed that the elder in question didn't want a 911 response but was unable to move from where they were at that moment. So we sent the WPD to do a wellness check and in fact, the individual had fallen but was OK but couldn't reach the walker in the other room and played it safe waiting for someone to retrieve it.

So there. A real call from someone needing help in a real way. In years past we've had frozen pipes, caregivers from Chicago looking for local help and a fall. That is why someone will always be here during a storm. It would be way easier to stay home but things happen during bad weather too. The weather doesn't care what happens to mere mortals. Our message is; call us, we'll answer the phone.



Food thoughts

Here's the thing; we have breakfast with French Toast, or Eggs. Then there are cookouts with sausages, dogs, burgers and those goodies. Etcetera. You get it. There are always people who will say "Why don't you have..." So let's go down that road again.

If you want to see different food for the Tuesday events, let us know. Put it in writing and we will consider it. Whatever you suggest has to be affordable, able to serve the crew and do-able. No full turkey dinners, we can't handle the birds. Got it? Oh-no liver. Lucifer will field a hockey league before we prep liver...

Let us know what you're thinking. Thanks!

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Serving elders since 1966!



Mardi Gras Tea

We're all the way back to February and this means half way to Karyn's Annual High Tea in August. So how do we celebrate half way day? With a tea party of course.

Now this even is more laid back than the usual soiree, no gloves and goofy hats. Of course there will be different flavors of tea but Mardi Gras is a New Orleans based festival- Fat Tuesday right?-so there will be a New Orleans flavor to this one. I really do not know what the food portion of this event will be but hopefully it will have a Cajun heat to it. (Karyn: hint...)

I do know that there will be cucumber sandwiches because, well, a tea without cucumber sandwiches is just wrong. As for the rest of it, you'll just have to come along to find out!

So, February 17, 1:00, right here at the Harper Center, Tea on Fat Tuesday with goodies. Let us know if you're coming so we can get food. The sign up is out there.

I suspect that it would be OK to wear a Mardi Gras mask to the event if you'd like!



AARP Important Changes!

The great news about this years AARP Tax Aide program is that there are increased slots available on Tuesday evening. The bad news for some people, and we're sorry about this, is that there will NOT be Saturday sessions this year. If you've been hoping for a Saturday morning we'll arrange the same service for you on a Tuesday.

Tax sessions are approximately an hour in length and appointments are definitely required. You can make one by calling us at 458.8250. Participants are asked to bring their 2013 tax return paperwork and all pertinent papers for 2014 tax filing. These sessions are open to tax payers of any age group with moderate income. Special attention will be paid to senior filers. This program is free of charge.

Aging Mastery



The Aging Mastery series will begin in March 2015 and continue through early May. There are multiple programs with helpful subject matter including sessions on sleep, nutrition, mental health and legal issues among others. We will be working with our friend Jennifer Munoz again -she'll be facilitating the programs-many of you already know her from other events. She'll be introducing speakers whose object is to challenge conventional ideas of aging including societal expectations and life roles. These days our life expectancy is longer and getting longer all the time. Still many of us spend more time in leisure activity than involvement in other areas. Paying a little more attention to and caring for yourself and becoming a more engaged person will transform some of us. The sessions for this program are about 90 minutes long so it's a small commitment for a big payoff. There will be an announcement regarding the details and how you can become involved in this program within the next two weeks. Watch for it!

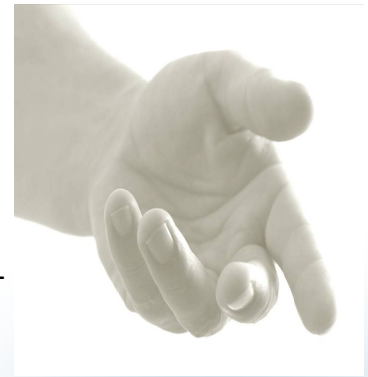
Seniors Helping Seniors

We made a new friend last month, Jane Apkin. She's heading up a new agency called "Seniors Helping Seniors". You may have seen the advertisements for the program or heard her radio bits. This agency seems to be a little different than some of the others. They apparently hire seniors to help other seniors and there is an indication that their services are affordable for most folks out there.

They also tell me that they can do one time activities such as ; seasonal leaf raking and spring clean up. Interesting eh?

Other services they may be able to help with include transportation, respite care, meals, cleaning, personal care, pet care, computer assistance, running errands and more.

They say they match each caregiver with the client-common interests, background and so on- to assure that there is compatibility between worker and client. How much does it cost? You'll have to come in to hear it. Jane will speak at 12:30 on the 3rd but we'll do a winter cookout at noon. Burgers or dogs from the Barbie in February. How about that?



Chronic Pain

We talked with our friend Maria Connors from Elder Services a couple weeks ago about chronic pain, what it was and what we could do about it. To recap briefly, chronic pain has been reported as moderate, burning, stiffness or a sensation of tightness lasting for more than 6 months. Common causes are headaches, , injuries, joint pain, backaches and some people report pain in the absence of actual injury.

The Chronic Pain seminars will assist participants to develop coping skills for chronic pain. It's that simple. Strategies for addressing pain. How does that sound? The series will run every Thursday afternoon from 1-3:30 for six weeks, February 5th through March 12th. There is a pre-registration for the class-ask us-and all materials and snacks will be provided...call us to register-458.8250.



February Food Events

So, what are we thinking about food in February? We realize that some of you folks will be going into Lenten Mode and therefore meat becomes a serious no-no on Fridays for the next month or two. We'll have to strategize around the issue of breakfast sausage so lets try FTF on Friday February 13 at 8:30 and BOT...hmmm, what shall we do?

How about pancakes on Friday February 20th? I don't think we've had pancakes in awhile. Both kinds of syrup will be available.

The Friendship Club has asked for chili on the day of their meeting on the 10th. I have an appointment with the dentist that morning so maybe...if not, we'll definitely have a chili date soon. We don't know when it will be but you'll see that announcement!

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We have a special treat on Wednesday February 25th-Susan Matsui and three other musician friends will be here at the Harper Center between noon and one to play a few pieces of classical music for your entertainment. You can join us for lunch-it's going to be De-Lux cheeseburgers with fixings and potatoes for lunch-ask Pat about this. There will be an ever so slight delay for bridge on that date but nothing serious. Bridge folks should come for lunch! This will be good!

Our Tai Chi instructor Youlin Shi will be away for the month of February but members of her class have indicated that they will carry on without her. We've left it in the schedule for the month and we'll know the actual schedule as time goes along.

We have discovered that there is never an inappropriate time for Hot Fudge Sundaes so the popup demon will be springing a surprise Hot Fudge day in the near future. There will be a tiny bit of advanced notice. It just wouldn't be a surprise otherwise now would it?

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Our foot care nurse Serena Merrill, will be in the house on Tuesday February 17th to work wonders on your feet, clipping nails, reducing calluses and massaging the soreness out. She has a couple openings for February and accepting sign ups for March now.

For those of you who have found yourselves to be challenged by the very technical stuff which comprises our health care insurance paperwork system, our SHINE Counselor Peg Jenks, will be in the house on Wednesday February 18th at 10:30 to help. Appointments are not necessary but appreciated; Peg is also available for individual consultation outside of normal hours by contacting us in the COA office at 458-8250.

The monthly Blood Pressure clinic officially sponsored by our friends from Sweetbrook will take place on Tuesday February 10th at noon immediately preceding the Friendship Club meeting. Important numbers to know, eh? Magic cookies!!!

Finally, the monthly Brown Bag, sponsored by the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts will be at Harper for pick up or delivery on Friday February 27th. Brown Bag is literally a brown paper sack filled with self stable foods and fresh fruits and veggies in season. Interested? Contact us here at Harper at 458-8250, and we'll help you thru the minimal applications process!

Happy February!